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RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1666
RUEHNM/AMEMBASSY NIAMEY 1232
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 2243
RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT 1828
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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [KCRM](#) [KWMN](#) [PREL](#) [AG](#)
SUBJECT: CONTINUING TO ENGAGE NGOS AND MFA ON TIP

REF: ALGIERS 859

Classified By: Ambassador Robert Ford; reasons 1.4 (b, d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: Following the June 12 release of the 2007 Trafficking in Persons report, we are continuing to engage NGOs and the Algerian government on TIP. The GOA feels it has been unfairly lumped into Tier 3 status with countries whose TIP problem it considers to be more severe. The GOA insists it is addressing the issue, mainly by amending legal texts to outlaw trafficking specifically. We have pushed back that the Algerians need to publicly acknowledge that trafficking is a problem and appoint a GOA official with whom we can work directly. We have also stressed that enforcement, and not just legal text changes, are important to changing Algeria's Tier 3 status. NGOs have indicated they are willing to raise awareness. This cable includes an action request at the bottom. END SUMMARY.

NGOs WILLING TO ENGAGE ON TIP

12. (C) As part of ongoing efforts to engage civil society on TIP, poloff met separately on June 25 and 26 with European NGO CISP and Algerian NGO AIDS Algerie. CISP, a European NGO based in Italy, works on illegal immigration and trafficking issues. AIDS Algerie, an Algerian NGO, works on commercial sex work issues. Both organizations were willing to explore partnering opportunities to raise public awareness of the TIP problem. (Comment: NGOs here need to boost their public discussion of the TIP problem lest this issue look like one raised solely by the American Government. They don't really know how to do this, and it will take alot of work from our end to spur this forward. End Comment.)

GOA STILL UNHAPPY ABOUT TIER 3

13. (C) In a June 27 lunch, MFA Secretary General (no. 2) Ramtane Lamamra and MFA representatives reiterated to use their surprise and dismay at Algeria's Tier 3 status in the 2007 TIP report. They claimed that the Algerian legal framework and enforcement was no worse than that in Morocco and Tunisia and yet only Algeria had landed on Tier 3. The Ambassador responded that we had cautioned the GOA last winter that such a ranking would be likely. He said that to move forward, we would like to see GOA public recognition of the broad problem in Algeria of human trafficking - and not just the subset of the sex trade. Ambassador reiterated our previous request to the MFA that the Algerian Government name an official TIP point of contact (reftel). Ambassador again

said this POC should not just be the U.S. desk officer at the MFA if the GOA wants to work with us seriously. The Algerians hinted that the MOJ might be able to name a TIP point of contact. (Comment: the MFA will have to sell that idea to the MOJ. We have been trying for weeks to get a meeting with the Justice Minister but so far have been rebuffed. End Comment.)

¶4. (C) Lamamra and MFA Director General for the Americas Fatiha Selmane acknowledged that Algerian law did not specifically address trafficking, but said the GOA was working on the issue. MFA representatives said the government was in the process of reexamining laws to address TIP, and that it was possible that the justice ministry (MOJ) could make a public announcement on TIP. They pointed to GOA ratification of several international conventions that address TIP-related issues as evidence that Algeria was serious about addressing the problem. The Ambassador applauded moves to update Algerian laws but underlined that enforcement, including arrests, prosecutions and punishment, were vital for us.

¶5. (C) COMMENT: Two weeks after its June 12 roll-out, the 2007 TIP report remains a sore spot for the GOA, though it is unclear to what extent this wounded pride will serve as a catalyst for real progress. Consistently on message, Lamamra said, "You can't put us in with countries like Saudi Arabia."

For Lamamra and MFA Americas Director General Selmane, the difference between the GOA position and that of the USG on TIP is one of semantics, not substance. For this reason, they are sincere in their belief that the GOA is working on the issue. We keep reminding them that we want to see more than changes in legal texts, although such changes are welcome too. To date, however, they have been unable to show much in the concrete action aside from arrests of persons involved in the sex trade here. Meanwhile, NGOs such as CISP and AIDS Algeria are amazed at GOA silence on the issue. They are not doing much publicly either, however. In sum, this is an uphill effort here.

¶6. (C) Action Request: It would be extremely useful to have from the Department information about why other North African countries avoided as low a ranking as Algeria so that we can get the GOA past its suspicions that the Tier 3 ranking is a political message.

FORD